

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PERMITS
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 18, 2002

TO: Jane Jurik

FROM: Paul May, Director

Following are what I consider to be the top accomplishments for this department, all of which are oriented toward improving customer service as it relates to the obtaining of building, electrical or mechanical permits and/or licenses.

The City received an improved Community Rating System (CRS) classification for Floodplan Rating of FEMA from Class 9 to class 8, saving flood insurance policy holders an additional 5% premium discount, totaling \$1,407,000 citywide.

The City received a Building code Effectiveness Grading Schedule Classification of Fourth class for commercial and industrial property from the Property Insurance Association of Louisiana. This could result in significant savings for all new construction citywide. This classification is based on qualification of the Departments inspection forces and aggressive code enforcement.

Initiated efforts to allow permit applications to start their construction even when the permit has not been issued. This was accomplished by amending the code to allow Special Foundation and Structural Frame Permit and Special Non-Structural Framing Permits to be issued.

Simplifying the procedure for trades licensing by proceeding with the change of the testing agency under contract with the City, eliminating the need for examination boards.

Revised internal policy to result in reduction of plan review time to Over-the-counter permits for cosmetic renovations, and change of the use permits for existing buildings whereby inspectors can assess compliance with the code.

Mechanical inspectors have been cross trained in the area of residential and commercial permits.

A significant increase in the number of permits received and processed in the Mechanical Inspection Division due to diligent inspector awareness and contractor observance of the installed work within the various area of the City.

Design and implementation of the department's computer system - SPIN consisting of 3 modules modules. (1) Permits and Inspections (2) Licenses and (3) code Enforcement.

Installation of an Optical Imaging system to store records - replacing an unreadable microfiche system.

Design and implementation of standardized testing for electrical contractors, mechanical contractors and operating engineers - all licensure exams are now administered by a national testing service.

Design and implementation of computerization for the Plan Review Division thus reducing the time it takes to issue plan review letters and ability to store documents in plan review files.

Creation of a permit Analyst unit for initial permit application intake with a strong customer service orientation.

Creation of a series of about 40 pamphlets to help the average person better understand the permitting process.

Adoption of the 1997 edition of the Standard Building Code.

Renovation of the main brake tag inspection in Mid City as part of capital improvements.

Developed a series of internal working polices aimed at clarifying our requirements and moving projects through the department more rapidly.

Increased the Mechanical Division inspector compliment by two in order to more quickly respond to citizen's questions and complaints about zoning matters.

Elimination of the licensing boards because their primary role of treating prospective applicants is being conducted by a national testing agency.

Physical improvements to the reception area and plan review division.